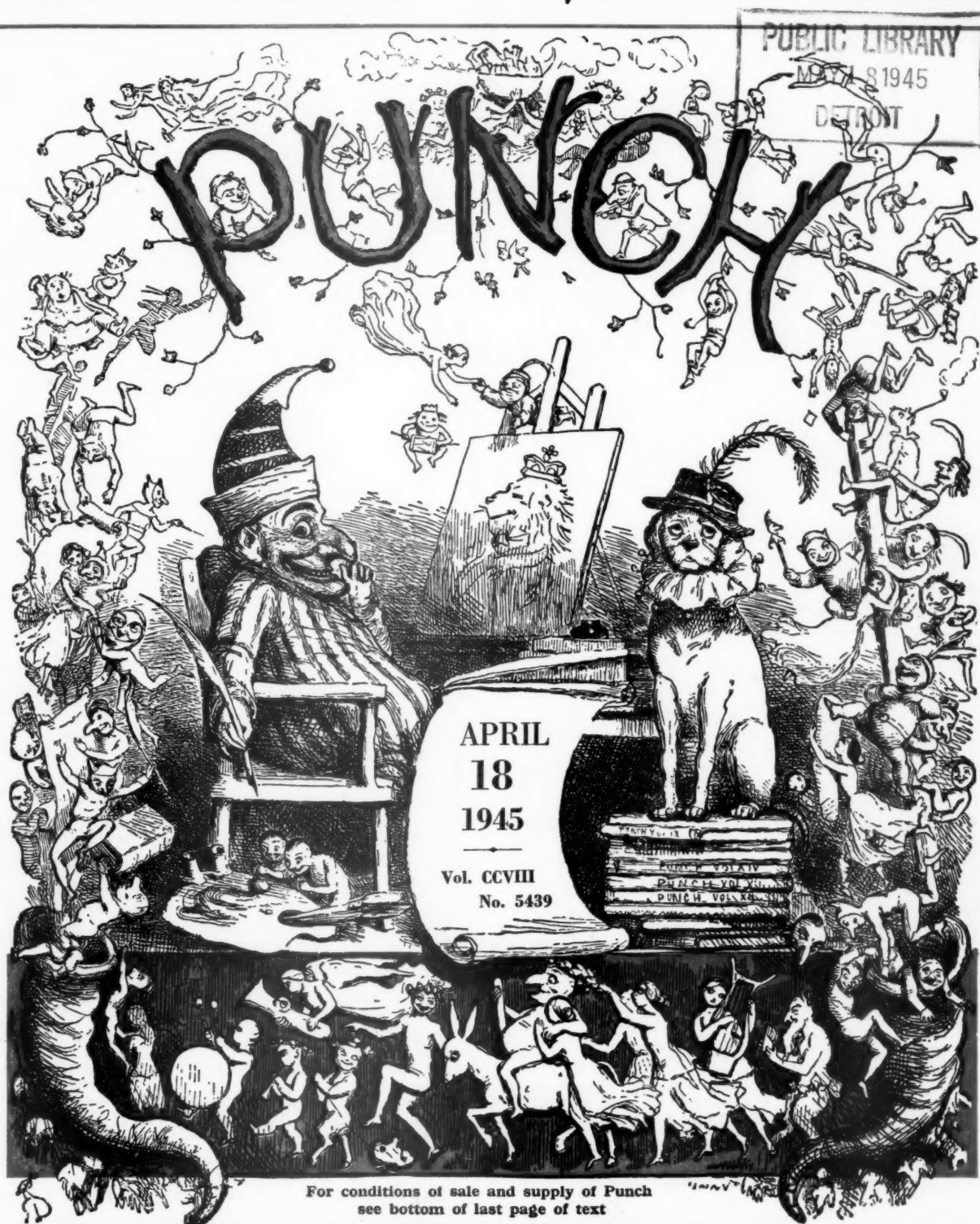


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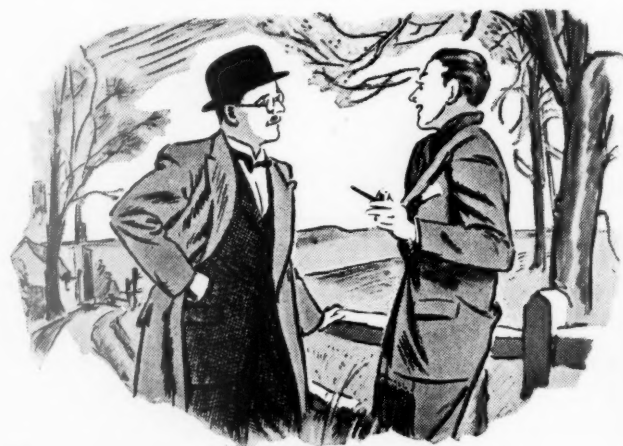




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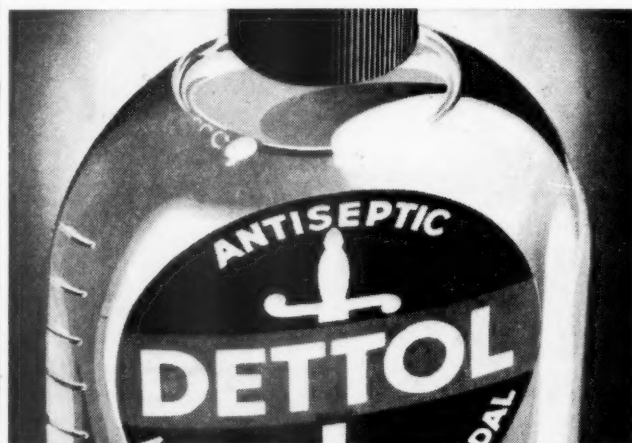


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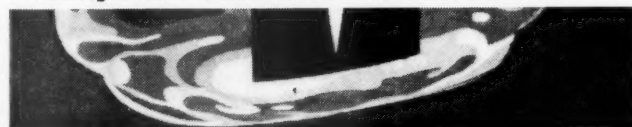
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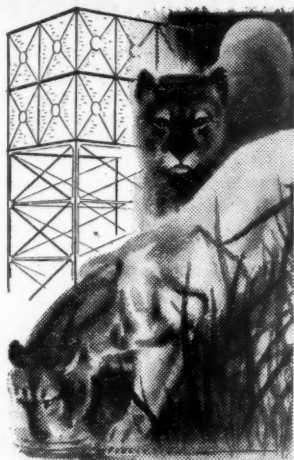
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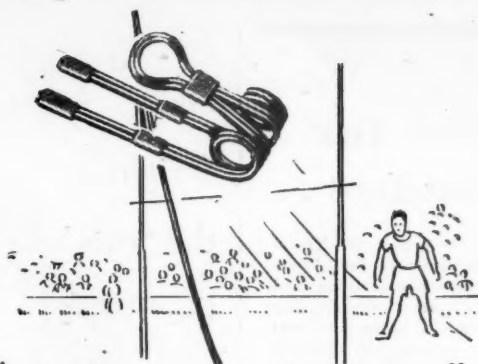
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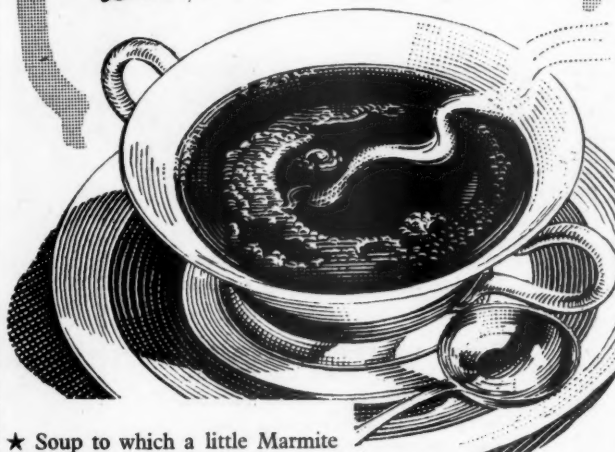
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A bottle of 'Alkia' Saltrates costs 3/9 (inc. Purchase Tax). Get one from your chemist to-day and begin your spa treatment to-morrow morning.





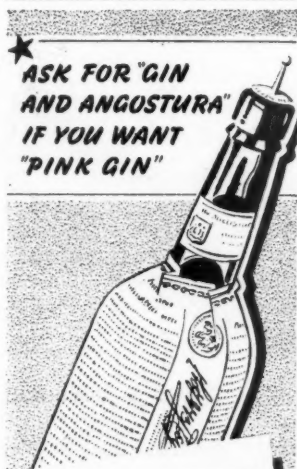
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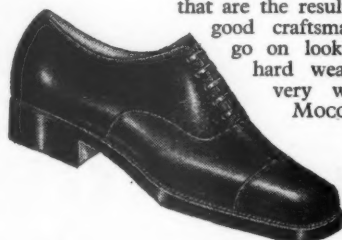
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AND GIN MAKE
THE ORIGINAL
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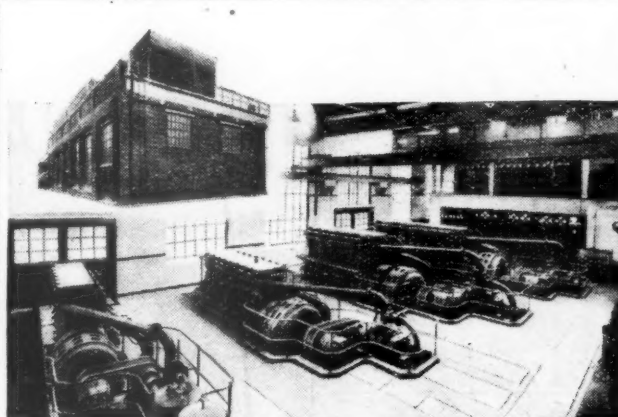
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WILKINSON'S LIQUORICE
ALLSORTS?"



Now it can be told...

Many of the Heinz Varieties that you could not get for so long have been on Service with the Forces. Here is a list of what they have had, and, knowing Heinz quality, you can judge what has been done to keep them "fighting fit":

SELF-HEATING CANS

of Kidney Soup, Cream of Green Pea Soup, Mock Turtle Soup, Cream of Celery Soup, Oxtail Soup, Cream of Chicken Soup, Cocoa Milk, Malt Milk.

DEHYDRATED VEGETABLES

Potato, Carrot, Cabbage.

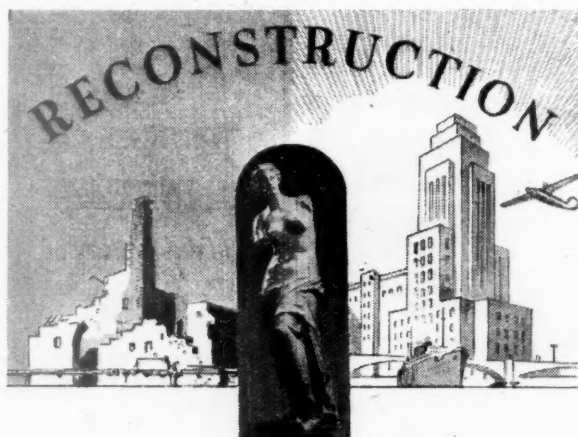
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Baked Beans — Tomato Soup — Celery Soup — Minced Beef and Vegetables — Savoury Rice and Sausages — Corned Beef Hash — Stewed Steak — Canned Mutton — Pork and Vegetables — Beef Stew — Boiled Beef, Carrots and Dumplings — Meat and Vegetable Ration — Steak and Kidney Pudding — Mutton Broth — Treacle Pudding — Mixed Fruit Pudding — Marmalade Pudding — Rice Pudding — Sultana Pudding — Date Pudding — Vegetable Salad — Sausages — Chicken and Ham Paste — Spaghetti.

HEINZ

57

Always ready to serve



Draughtsmen all over the country are planning the better Britain that we all hope to see rise from the ruins of war. Because they are so reliable, more and more Venus pencils will be used in these plans for reconstruction.

Venus pencils are scarce, but still obtainable, and there is a

choice of 7 grades under the standard name of Venus "War Drawing"—also Blacklead, Copying and Coloured "Utility" Pencils. For our part we look forward to the moment when the pre-war Venus pencil with its characteristic finish and in 17 grades will be in full production again.

Build up with



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QUALITY PENCILS

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GREYS

CIGARETTES

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Issued by Godfrey Phillips Limited



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Clarks of Street have retailers in nearly every town.

Please choose from the styles available.

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PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCVIII No. 5439

April 18 1945

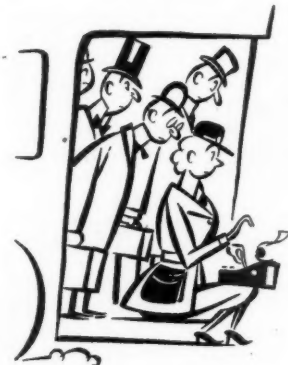
Charivaria

MEMBERS of an R.A.F. mess have proved that soaking in beer renders a pound note unrecognizable. It depends of course on what you mean by soaking.

"The scenic beauty of this country must be preserved," says a writer. Doubtless our public-spirited advertisers will soon be building hoardings round it.

The latest news from Gestapo headquarters indicates that the *Wehrmacht* is continuing its retreat against stiffening resistance.

According to a critic, Hollywood is determined to produce more Shakespeare. The only minor difficulty is finding somebody to write it.



As there is still no basic petrol ration, nature lovers fear that bluebells this Whitsun will once again have to do their wilting on the backs of push-bicycles.

In view of the rapid disintegration of the Reich our economic experts are now busily making arrangements to transfer Germany's oil shortage to Japan.

A bus conductress has written her autobiography. The wrapper proclaims that it is very full inside.

A business man complains that Paris is not the same. Business trips are still far too like business trips.



"Many times in our history we have stood splendidly isolated. In the present war we held our 'far-flung battle line' with little more than stout hearts with an English flag and a wonderful leader behind us."—*Daily paper*.

Flung a little too far, weren't we?

It is rumoured that V-day is already fixed. But recent squad-car manoeuvres indicate that the police are ready to move it along.

The closing of the escape gap in Northern Holland has cut off a record bag of rumours before they could get out of Germany to the launching sites.

By all accounts German civilians are no end relieved to hear that werewolves are operating in the occupied areas. They thought it would be the Gestapo.

May we remind our readers, if Peace should come before this appears in print, that we always maintained that it would.

"Sometimes the B.B.C. revives an old idea, makes some alterations and broadcasts it with success," says a correspondent. What about a new feature at 8.59 P.M. on Sundays called *The National Anthems of the Neutrals*?



Japan is contemplating a change of policy. She aims to get a stranglehold on the Japanese islands.

"In the morning, while his father was in the back yard, prisoner left the house, and was not seen again until the previous Sunday week."—*Surrey paper*.
A very subtle move.

Several new child stars are being "groomed" for the screen. To show what to avoid, we suggest that earlier child epics be screened for the groom.

The Sunne Rising

HOODWINK'D again, unhappie Sunne,
What dost thou saye
Now Man hath fool'd again thy measur'd daye?
Hast lost thy heat? Is thy bright anger done?
Up, fool! and show thou'rt not afraid
To chide, that his deceitfull time-pieces,
And not thy diall's true and flow'ry shade,
Controle his eager traines, his punctuall offices.
Push back his clocks false finger, that doth lie
By ful two howres and thy prowd rule defye.

His henchman, earlier or late,
Why should'st thou bee?
Thine abject servitude enslaveth mee,
Since, at thy rising, six becomes my eight.
Or dost thou think, delaying long,
Thy beames, so luminous and strong,
And that round fierie splendour of thy face
Can holde, these somer dayes, an equall place
With her, who in the firmament doth shine,
My other sunne, whose blaze eclipses thine?

Table-Talk of Amos Intolerable

XIII

WISHING to throw his weight about even a little more than usual in the presence of a man he believed to be on the reporting staff of a popular newspaper, Amos suddenly announced: "If only one paper has it, it's a scoop. If all the papers have it, however, it may be true."

Here he stuck out his lower lip and scowled at the man, who shortly afterwards annoyed him very much by proving to be a business visitor from Birmingham, where he was something to do with a firm of dealers in bird-seed.

The lengthy periods Amos has spent talking to us about his novel might, if laid end to end, have enabled him to write it. To the best of my belief not a word of it is yet on paper, but Amos is never tired of making general observations about plot, style, characterization, atmosphere, and narrative technique.

Thus he once declared that his novel was to be a documentary novel. "Reportage," he said, "is the thing."

"Do you mean to say," asked a sceptic in the company, "that you know enough facts and details about any place, process of manufacture, trade, event or even period to fill a documentary novel on it?"

"Why, no," said Amos cheerfully. "What I omitted to tell you was this: my documentation is to be of *imaginary* facts. Think of the scope! Think of the saving of labour! Think of the immunity from criticism!" And when some of us said we didn't get it he explained: "Look. Say my setting is in a huge plant that manufactures plagstuck machinery."

"Plag—?"

"Plagstuck machinery. I have a powerful chapter describing the vast room in which more than two hundred girls sit working, each at her winshaft-leveller. One of them has a faulty stobble, and the machine-shop steward—"

He went on like this for some time, till somebody said "But what's the good of all this?"

"Good?" repeated Amos as if he had been insulted.

"Who'll read all this dull stuff if—"

"Exactly," Amos cut in. "Dull. I admit it. I glory in it. You find it dull because you happen to know the words are meaningless, but how many of you would admit you found it dull if you knew they weren't? Let alone admitting, how many of you would actually *find* it dull? The reader does all the work with this sort of writing. He reads a lot of unfamiliar names and words, and that's enough—so long as he thinks the author has really been there and done it, or otherwise knows all about it, he will work his imagination to the bone (short as the distance may be) to conjure up enough associations to make him believe he's interested."

He paused. "I admit," he then went on, "that he may refuse to do this if he believes the author *doesn't* know, or *hasn't* been there." He looked all round at us. "If therefore I ask you all to treat this revelation of my intentions as a secret—"

He then looked all round again and said "H'm."

Amos's main concern in his novel, we gathered (after several experiments had convinced him that it was no good trying to persuade us it was anything more reputable), was to save himself work.

"The sheer labour of producing enough words to fill a book," he once said, "is all that keeps practically everybody from writing one; not that anything *does* seem to be keeping practically everybody from writing one. Anything that tends to obviate or dilute this labour is to be welcomed. I sometimes wish I could bear—"

He stopped and seemed to be wrestling with himself.

"The fear of being credited with mystical tendencies is the only thing that prevents me from—" he said, and stopped again.

After a good deal of this sort of thing it appeared that he was very much tempted to write what he called a Novel of Hyperæsthesia.

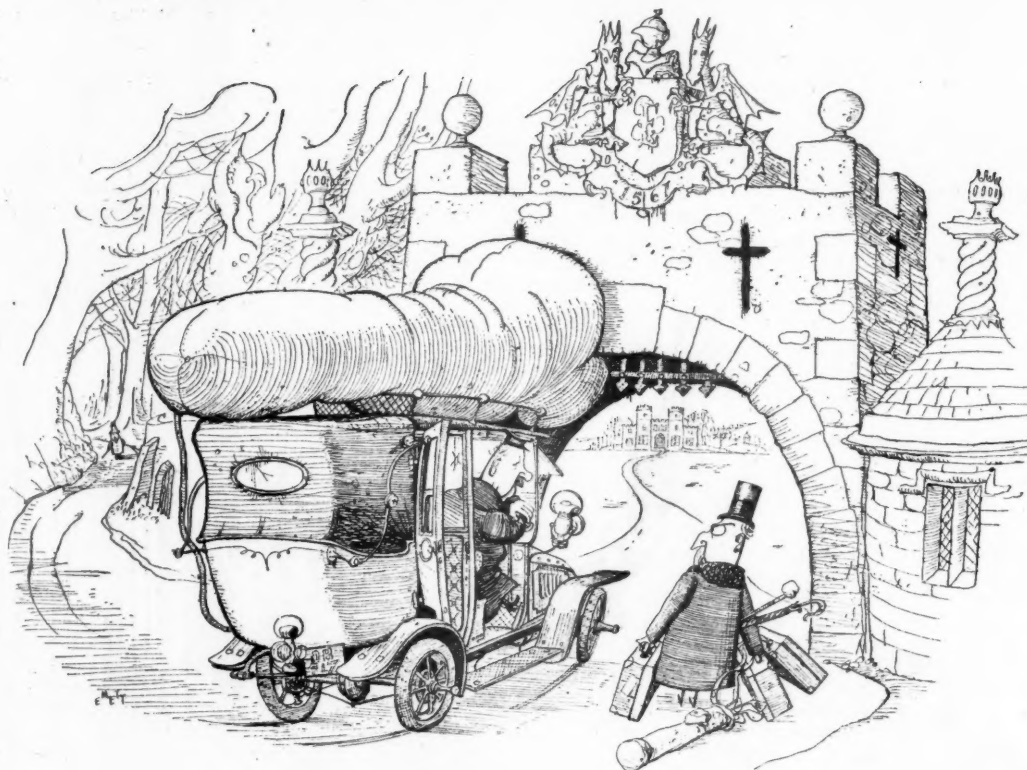
"Everybody in a book of this kind, all the time, but increasingly towards the end," he explained, "is—to summarize—thunderstruck by everything. In an ordinary novel the man says 'How are you?' and the girl says 'All right' and that's all you can make out of it, two lines—and twenty or thirty more to go before you reach even the bottom of that page. But hyperæsthesia—hyperæsthesia will get you to the end of the chapter on less than that. The great point is spiritual awareness. The man says 'How are you?' and you really go to town about the girl's reactions. *And it seemed to her* and all that stuff. It seems to her that his eyes are getting bigger and bigger, and there's a roaring in her ears, and she suddenly realizes what Swedenplato meant by saying the universe was an immense tray round which feathers were blown by a chameleon, and the radiance informing the idea of Metaphysical Certainty grows and grows till it fills the sky, and—oh, hundreds of words of it. Then comes the end of the paragraph and she says 'All right,' *and it seemed to him* . . . and there you are, off again. Write for hours and never have to think at all."

"I have even considered the choice of a pseudonym," Amos said, "under which to write. However, after reflecting on what the quick-minded library public, with its razor-keen intelligence, must make at present of the precise distinction between the novelists Graham Greene, F. L. Green, Henry Green and Julian Green—not to mention H. G. Greens, J. B. Greenley, and G. Bernard Green—I have decided that on the whole my own name will introduce enough variety as it stands." R. M.



WHO GOES HOME?

"I think I'd better start hailing now."



"... a little matter of the camel, the beye of the needle, and the basic, your grace . . ."

News from Germany

MY DEAR MOTHER,—It has been quite an eventful day.

We started off after breakfast in a jeep—myself and McNab, the batman-driver, and it was our intention to get to the village of X on the other side of the Rhine, where we expected to find Divisional H.Q. It was a nice fine morning and just the day for an outing, as you might say.

I don't intend to go into details about crossing the Rhine. A great many people have already described the crossings and a great many other people have had a crossing which was very different and much more unpleasant than mine. Besides, I had crossed one section of the river at Nijmegen at Christmas, so I feel that the novelty has worn off. Anyway, we crossed it.

Travelling on the other side is all

very well, but it has its inconveniences. For one thing, all the signposts are in German, which I find very confusing, and besides, if the road is good in open country, inside any town or village it seems rather to merge in the general chaos of ruins and craters and it is very difficult to find the same road on the other side of the place, even if you can get round, through, or over it.

And then we met the photographer. It was in one of these villages, and I had pulled up for the refreshment of a cup of tea from the flask, and this chap came up, very official and with a big camera. We were sitting under one of the few stretches of wall that happened to be standing and he said "Do you mind if I take your photos under that sign?" and I said "Of course not," without thinking, and then looked up at the sign, which I hadn't seen before. It said, in German

of course, "We Thank God For Our Fuehrer."

Well, he took some photos and we started off again, and it wasn't until he was well out of sight that I began to think. So if you see in some daily paper a photograph of your child under this sign, don't think it was taken by some German trying to be sarcastic at our expense. It was just one of those unfortunate coincidences. But I should like to have another talk with that photographer.

In some way we seemed to get lost after leaving that village, or, at least, the map lost all resemblance to the country we were actually traversing. We picked up five ex-prisoners of war and gave them a lift. Three were Russian and two Polish or, possibly, three were Polish and two Russian, for each set spoke a different language, neither of which I could recognize.

For that matter, they might have been three Hungarians and two Rumanians or vice versa. Or anything. You meet such strange people on the roads nowadays. They knew the way all right. Quite well, I should think, judging by their gestures. But since they couldn't tell us, it was of little practical importance.

We dropped them on an autobahn and then we picked up an American colonel. His car had got stuck and he was thumbing a lift. He knew where we were. He also knew where his unit was and, since he was in a hurry and was also a colonel, we went to his unit.

I must say they treated us very well. Hot coffee and plenty of food out of tins (and it is surprising what goes into an American tin these days), and then he sent someone with us to the nearest cross-roads and told us to go straight on up that road and it would bring us on to the autobahn and then we would be pretty well at X.

We did just that and reached the autobahn and turned right and drove on happily in the afternoon sun. The country was quite deserted, hardly damaged at all and very pleasant indeed, with spring coming and birds singing and this being Germany at last. I wasn't worried about where we were, for, anyway, you can never tell what part of an autobahn you are on. They are all exactly the same, mile after mile.

We went on a bit and I saw a village just off the road which looked as though it was X, so I turned off and drove towards it. It looked extremely peaceful. I turned into a side turning and stopped for another drink of tea and a cigarette. There was hardly a soul about and things were so normal that when a very elderly postman came to empty a letter-box just up the street I nearly posted a letter to you in it, until I remembered that I hadn't got a German stamp.

Then, in the distance, I heard a sound that I knew quite well, a tank approaching at some speed, and then others—and then it all started. From the top of the road in which we were, the part we had just not reached, there was the equally familiar sound of an 88 mm. gun and some Spandaus opening up on the tanks, and it was suddenly borne in on me that perhaps this wasn't the village of X. Perhaps we should have turned left when we reached the autobahn, not right.

It would be nice to be able to say that I captured the village, but in point of fact the tanks did. McNab and I went to ground in a shrubbery.

When it was all over I was in favour of turning back to find Div.

H.Q. but McNab smiled and stretched himself more comfortably.

"We're doing fine here, sir," he said. "The tanks have gone on. If we bide here a wee while, Div. H.Q. will be coming down this road verra shortly." You couldn't say he was wrong.

Then he wandered off, and in no time, it seemed, he was back with some twenty dejected prisoners, the burgo-master, the keys of the local gaol and two bottles of wine which he swore had been thrust into his hand by a small girl who had then run away rapidly. That was followed by a considerable crowd which McNab, who seems to have some knowledge of German, addressed for about ten minutes. The crowd then dispersed and we were left in peace with the prisoners, one or two odd sandwiches and the two bottles of wine.

I may be wrong, but my view is that McNab was Military Governor of a German village from tea until dinner, when Div. H.Q. arrived.

So you see, it was quite an eventful day.

Your loving son, HAROLD.

o o

Cui Bono?

WELL, chaps, I've called this meeting of interested bodies to consider whether we can form a Discussion Group to meet here once a week and natter about things in general. Nine of you out of a unit strength of three thousand isn't a very promising start, but I understand that the response is always rather poor at

first. I think we ought to get this going straight away, so I suggest we meet next Tuesday for our first session. "Post-War Housing" strikes me as an interesting subject to . . . No, old boy, you're quite right, I had forgotten the Ensa show next Tuesday. In that case we'd better start the following Tuesday—that will be the 1st, I think, and—what did you say, Corporal? You can't manage Tuesdays? Are there any other types who can't manage Tuesdays? . . . Um, three of you. That only leaves six, and we ought to have more than that for a discussion. Let's see, what about Thursdays? . . . Itma? Oh, yes, that won't do, and Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the room isn't available. It looks like Tuesdays, chaps, so you three have had it for the time being. Now, "Post-War Housing" should provoke a lively discussion . . . No, I don't think we *do* know much about it really, old boy. Can anybody suggest an alternative? . . . The Black Market, Sergeant? No, I'm afraid that's not up our street. Any others? . . . Oh, no, we couldn't really. You see, we shall have to keep written notes of these discussions, and it might not look so good—besides, we might get some of the Waafery in, and what would the Queen Bee say? . . . Music, old boy? Can't say I know much about it. Anybody keen on music? Most of you! What's that, old boy, a gramophone concert? Yes, that's an idea. We can bag some records and you can run it. Oh, but you can't manage Tuesdays—well, let's make it Thursday then and hope for the best. O.K., chaps, it's a piece of cake. A gramophone concert next Thursday. Good show!



The Memoirs of Mipsie

By Blanche Addle of Eigg

IX—The Final Rift

WHAT can be more despicable than *noblesse* which does not oblige, a duke with the soul of a commoner, a coronet with balls of clay? These epithets—and worse if there be any—might well be showered on my brother-in-law, Bovo Briskett, for refusing the common courtesy of giving grounds for divorce (on the futile plea that the only grounds he knew were those of his own park) and subjecting my poor sister to that humiliation instead. I will spare my dear readers the bitter details, for I have already told the whole sad story in my first book, *Lady Addle Remembers*. Suffice it to say that Mipsie found herself in 1903 alone, stripped of everything, including her good name and her pearls, robbed of her children except for six months in the year, struggling to keep body and soul together on the pittance of £3,000 a year which Bovo allowed her. "I feel outlawed," she wrote to me from her suite at the Crillon during the first months. My immediate reply was to beg her to leave Paris and make her home with us at Bengers. She accepted gratefully. "All that I want is to be quiet and to get to know which are my own children," I remember her saying when she arrived.

Her delightful pair—Ferdinand and Millie—were slightly older than my two toddlers, James and Hector, but the four were as devoted as cousins can be, and except for Ferdinand trying to drown James—but only in fun—and Millie (an adorable little imp, the image of Mipsie) tying up Heccy with skipping-ropes one day and hitting him in the face with stinging-nettles until he gave her his pearl horseshoe pin, they were as happy as the day was long. I was upset with Millie for that episode, I must confess, and I recollect insisting to her mother that the child must either give Heccy back his pin or be punished. Mipsie was adamant. "There is no question about which course is right," she said firmly. "Millie must be punished."

Nowadays of course the upbringing of children has greatly changed, and I dare say we should be considered old-fashioned in our methods. My dear Margaret, who now has the happiest reasons for studying child psychology, writes to me that she is very interested in a new theory called, apparently, "Inverted Sin." I don't

really understand it very well, but I fancy the idea is that all childish naughtiness is in reality moral qualities trying to find fulfilment. Thus, breaking things is the unconscious desire to break down social barriers, telling lies is the imagination seeking an outlet for expression, bullying and unkindness is the ego searching for self-reliance, and greed is just generosity "beginning at home." So the child is encouraged to bully and lie, is given something new to break each day, and supplied with plentiful opportunities for overeating. In that way the real self is not repressed and grows out of the cocoon of a disagreeable child into a fine man or woman. Though there are, I understand, fairly frequent cases where the early training takes a hold and is not discarded in later years.

It all seems a trifle too modern to me, but anyway I am sure I shall love my grandchild, however my dear Margaret decides as to his or her future upbringing.

But to return to Mipsie and her sojourn at Bengers. Happy as this was, it was not long before she began, very naturally, to yearn for "some tiny corner of my own to call home," as she touchingly put it, and she took, as a little *pied-à-terre* , a house in Park Lane, furnishing it entirely from Bengers so, as she expressed it, "to have something tangible to remember her dear sanctuary by." I thought this such a beautiful idea, and was also glad in her straitened circumstances to be able to help her in a small way financially, but I was never absolutely certain that Addle saw it in quite the same light. "How long is Mipsie staying with us?" he asked once during the transition stage between town and country. When I said "For as long as she wants to, I hope. Why?" My husband replied: "I was wondering if we'd have anything left to sit on soon." This referred, I guessed, to the fact that my boudoir, where we were sitting at the time, was indeed rather chairless, because Mipsie had lost her heart to the Hepplewhite set which had been there, and the new set I had ordered to replace them had not yet been delivered. I had tried to make things look better by having some packing cases moved up and draping them with petit point, but I fear Addle, who was sitting on one, may have noticed the difference. So in some trepidation I asked "You do like Mipsie, don't you, dear?" and went on to tell him that only that morning I had had a letter from Bovo in which even he referred to Mipsie's "taking ways." My husband smiled and nodded. "Taking ways is just the right description," he

said, and I felt happy again, realizing that he too was a victim to my sister's ineffable charm.

But Mipsie was destined never to dwell in that little Mayfair nest. The reason for her change of plans was a sermon we heard in Great Bengers church from a visiting missionary just back from India. He discoursed on the great contrast that existed between the poor outcasts among India's teeming millions and the immensely rich princes, in their palaces like abodes from the Arabian Nights. Mipsie listened, her eyes gleaming with sympathy for the Untouchables, and after the service she sought me in my bedroom.

"Blanchie," she said, "I have been wrong in thinking in such a small circumscribed way, when there is so much to see, so many of the world's treasures for all to share. I am going to India, where the thought of such wrongful distribution of wealth haunts me. Perhaps—who knows?—I can help to even out those cruel inequalities."

Within a week she had sold the Park Lane house with all its contents so as to pay for the journey which, as my dear readers will soon see, extended far beyond India. She was thus one of the first cultured women (by which of course I mean English women) to go, alone and unprotected, into the far corners of the globe. Did I say unprotected? No, for such was the appeal of her beauty, her courage, her very helplessness, that wherever she went protectors seemed to spring up, as if by magic, at her side. M. D.

Clothes

PERSONALLY," said Captain Sympson, "I shall take the sports jacket and flannel trousers."

We were discussing a paragraph in a newspaper describing the issue of civilian clothes that would be made to us when in the fullness of time we were demobilized. The choice of a lounge suit or sports jacket and flannel trousers is a tantalizing one.

"I have not a shred of civilian clothing left," Sympson admitted. "As I dealt with my editors only over the telephone I had no need to be a dressy man before the war, and what few clothes of distinction I possessed in September 1939 are now lost to me. The heather-mixture lounge suit that I bought for my abortive interview with the editor of *Country Life* in 1928 was destroyed by the incendiary

bomb that fell on my flat in Bow during the first week of the original old-fashioned blitz. The tail-coat that I purchased from my Cousin Richard in order to report a dinner of the Anglo-Berlin Fellowship for the *Weekly Swastika* I lent to a fellow-journalist when I was called up, and I have since heard that it fell a victim to a V.L."

"What about your plus-fours?" I asked.

"I wore them constantly in the blitz of 1940," he said, "and they were so severely damaged on the occasion of my heroic rescue of one hundred and seventy-five bottles of beer from the Bird-in-Bush when it received a direct hit in the cellar that I had to give them to salvage. After that I was reduced to wearing the blue pin-stripe that I bought to impress the editor of the *Poetry World* in 1927. It wore very thin as my entry into the Army was delayed so long, and my eventual call-up in November 1940 came only just in time to save me from obvious patches."

"It seems a pity," I said, "that our Army clothes cannot be worn after the war, with some slight alterations. I have two perfectly good battle-dresses."

"So have I," said Sympson, "and I cannot see any reason why they should not be worn during the daytime for the first few years after the war. They might be dyed blue or green, or even crimson. I think it would be a good idea if one of the daily papers were to form a League of Battle-Dress Wearer-Outers. Members would swear to go to the office in their battle-dress until it was worn out. An odd man doing it would be conspicuous, but if everybody did it nobody would mind."

"And battle-dress," I said, "is quite a convenient assembly of garments, so long as you remember that anything fragile put into the field-dressing pocket always breaks when you sit down."

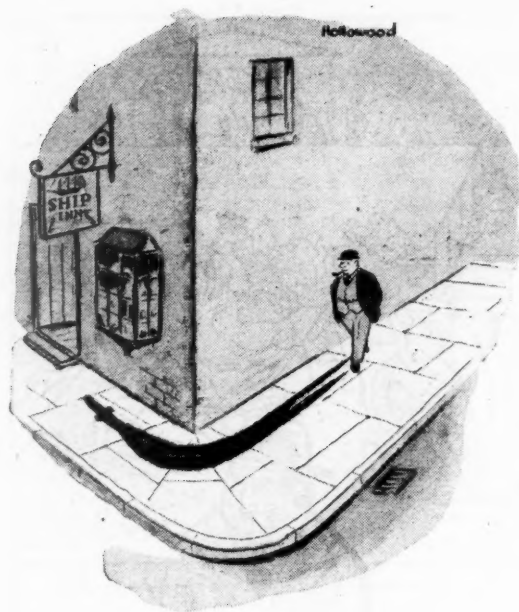
"For evenings," Sympson went on, "we could wear our service-dress, dyed a nice purple, and with bone buttons instead of brass ones. And Army overcoats of course would be easily adapted. In this way nobody need buy any clothes at all until they came down a lot in price. And could we not make a friendly gesture to the nice Germans by presenting them with the clothes that the Army intend to give us when we are demobilized? The Germans would then have to go through the mental torture of deciding between lounge suit and sports jacket and flannel trousers."



"I had to keep nagging at him for weeks before he would take a holiday."

The Final Quest

THE life of a man has been viewed as a quest,
How justly, all thinkers are quick to attest:
As soon as its days in the cradle are done
The child's on the look-out for food and for fun;
The lad, though to cynics how hopeless it seems,
Devotedly looks for the lass of his dreams,
And when he's outgrown all illusions of youth
He possibly turns to the search for the truth,
Which very well might his attention engage
For the rest of his life—yet he spends his ripe age
In fussily looking all over the place
(To judge by myself) for—his spectacle-case! W. K. H.



On Being About to Ride a Horse

THERE can't be very much in it. Obviously. Quite small children do it, and so do very old men. Grip with your knees, people tell me. Well, if that's the secret of it, I reckon I can grip with my knees as well as any old man. Old people's knees are notoriously weak; they totter. Whereas my own knees are pretty good.* I don't mean they are anything out of the way. People don't say "You ought to see that chap's knees"; at least, they don't say it in my hearing. But they are pretty good. I should say that any horse that's been gripped by me would have cause to remember it for many a long day. I may be wrong, but that's what I should say.

Man has been riding horses, for enjoyment or profit, for many centuries now. The Aztecs rode. The Phoenicians rode well. The old Greeks were constantly on horseback, gripping with their knees. So were the Romans. Labienus, for instance, had a horse which was wounded by a dart. Nothing of that sort is likely to happen to me, provided I keep clear of the open windows of public-houses; but it is recorded of Labienus, and I repeat the story, without apology, here. Even Neanderthal man, I dare say, had a horse which he called Eohippus.

The association of horse and man is as old as history itself. This fact has been noted before, but I stress it again because so many people who decide to take up riding do so in a rather flamboyant and aggressive manner, as if they were embarking on something new and perilous in the field of human endeavour. They talk of never having done it before, and of not having the least idea, and how they are certain to be thrown or rolled on or get their stirrups crossed in mid-stream, and a thousand and one like discomforts and disasters. They would have one believe that they are taking their lives in their hands over this business, that it is pretty courageous in them, in brief, to put their necks into such a noose at all.

Now there is nothing like this about me. I absolutely decline to make much of so small an affair. I foresee neither danger nor difficulty, and I expect to ride pretty well right from the start. Why not? I can ride a bicycle—rode one, as a matter of fact, as quite a small boy, and found no particular difficulty in that. Once or twice round the lawn, I suppose, and a good push off down the lane and I was riding as well as many a man twice or even three times my age. And remember that with a bicycle, apart from the steering and braking and ringing the bell and the constant pedalling, you have to balance the machine. A horse balances itself, I take it? I shall certainly insist on riding one that does.

I am absolutely clear in my mind about what I am going to do. I shall put my left foot in the stirrup and swing myself into the saddle, just as generations of men and women have been doing since the fall of Babylon, or earlier. Then I shall pick up the reins and tell the horse to get going. To steer, I shall pull on the right rein when I wish to turn to the right, and on the left rein if for any reason I desire to deviate to the left. When the way lies straight ahead I shall pull on neither rein, and when I want to turn right round (to see what is behind me, for example, or to go home) I shall pull continuously on the left or right rein as may be most convenient until my horse has traversed 180° in azimuth. If my horse is unable to follow these elementary directions I shall demand that a better-trained animal be put at my disposal immediately. There should be absolutely no need for finesse in conveying the rider's wishes to an animal that has been closely associated with man since the dawn of history.

Whether I shall grip with my knees or not remains to be seen. I shall certainly not do so merely because I have been told it is the thing to do. My mind is entirely open on this point, and if my own comfort or convenience is in any way augmented by gripping I shall not hesitate to grip. It will be useless to tell me, if anyone is mad enough to try it on, that I ought to do it for the sake of my mount, because I shall decline to believe that any horse could be benefited in any way by being gripped by such knees as mine. I shall hope to make this clear to my instructor—for it is part of the mumbo-jumbo of horsemanship that an instructor has to be present at the start, for all the world as if one were taking up some difficult art such as skating or field cookery—I shall make this clear, I was saying, right at the beginning. He may as well know exactly where we stand.

Some people never make good riders because they are afraid of their horses. I am not at all afraid of horses. For one thing, I am a good deal older than most horses I meet and consequently have more experience and, well, *savoir faire*. Statistics are not to hand, but I should not be surprised to learn that I am the oldest horse now living.. No. That is not well put. I mean I should not be surprised to learn that of all horses now living I am the oldest—or rather that no living horse is older than, as old as, I should say, me. I could probably give twenty or thirty years to any animal I am likely to be called upon to ride. So I am not exactly disposed to be afraid of them.

Nor is it only in point of age that man is superior to the horse. In intellect, in sensibility and address, in power of mind, in the whole range and sweep of civilized life and art, the horse, in common with the dog, the elephant and the comparatively highly-developed ape, is acknowledged to be vastly inferior to man. Only those with guilty consciences, they say, are afraid of their inferiors.

I may have something more to say on this subject, after my ride.

H. F. E.

Our Open Forum

XIV—Too Old at Sixty-Five?

Mr. Oklar Homer, who makes this small contribution to our series of chats on Reconstruction, is unswerving and considerate. "Folks call me an adventurer, but I don't know, I'm sure," he once said. Certainly his career has been both chequered and shady. He has been prefect, tenant, employee, right-hand man and defendant; and he has served on five committees. A prolific writer, his best known works include: "You and Contraband" (a pamphlet), "A History of Prison Reform in Essex," "I Believe in Callisthenics," "Seldom No More" (a novel), and "A Longish History of Britain." In 1932 he married a Miss Appleby of Truro, on the rebound from a fruitless pursuit of film actress Mahgery Doré. This marriage, though morganatic, has turned out very well—both parties having benefited. Mr. Homer resides at "Home from Home," Churley Road, Bromley, cables our Walsall correspondent.

AT what age should a man retire from politics? This is a question, friends, that is of immediate and paramount importance. If it can be answered authoritatively—and that, I think, means scientifically—we can make democracy more than a mere mockery and knock some of the parley out of parliament.

At their recent conference at Scarborough the Co-operative Party adopted a resolution instructing the National Committee to place an age-limit of sixty-five on parliamentary candidates. This is a sign of the times that deserves the closest consideration. At first sight it would appear a gross infringement of personal liberty: to legislate against advancing years. Surely, one might say, a man is himself the best judge of his age. Just as a man should know instinctively when, and when not, to be left out of a round, he should know when to climb down from public office. But does he? There are many men who find difficulty in saying no in any circumstances.

How does a man recognize the onrush of old age? Obviously his first guide is the date, coupled with the knowledge that times marches on. Then he may note a rapid stiffening in the terms offered by the life assurance companies, and the increasing deference paid to his words by near relations. He may deduce something from the height or width of his children. But his arteries will tell him most.

Almost every man over thirty-five worries about his arteries. Every morning, usually just after shaving, he tests them for elasticity. He taps them and analyses the resultant sound for hints of petrification. If the note emitted is staccato and ringing he knows that he is on the downward path. But it is not always so simple. And even though he may be forced to acknowledge the fact of physical decline he is still faced by a cruel dilemma. How far does breadth of experience compensate for organic degeneration? A young man calls to him across the years—a young man with arteries as tender as freshly-plucked macaroni—and he remembers blushing the awkward innocence and ignorance of his salad-days. At sixty-five he may well regard himself as a more useful legislator than the callow ass of thirty.

But though each man is the best judge of his own powers, there are obvious if unwritten laws that he should observe. Thus a fifty per cent. decay of vital tissue must disqualify

him from participation in public affairs. An M.P. is not merely a brain. His legislative labours test his physique very considerably. He must be fit enough to march out into the lobbies during divisions—and these are sometimes distressingly frequent. He must be able to wave Order-papers and slap dispatch-boxes at least as convincingly as the Opposition. He must travel frequently between Westminster and his constituency to test the pulse of public opinion. He must be *quite* active.

I should say, off-hand, that a twenty per cent. depreciation is the maximum that any M.P. should allow himself. He can test himself in various ways. Let every M.P. seeking re-election answer these questions:

1. Do I sometimes abstain from voting through sheer physical fatigue?
2. Do I get pins and needles in my arteries during a long sitting?
3. Do I suffer from butter-fingers when I try to catch the Speaker's eye?
4. Am I heartily sick of the faces across the floor of the House?
5. When the cry "Who Goes Home?" rings out do I automatically start to think up excuses?
6. Does my mind wander to the bar of the House during long speeches?
7. Am I distracted by the presence of lady Members in the Chamber?
8. Am I afraid of the Whips?

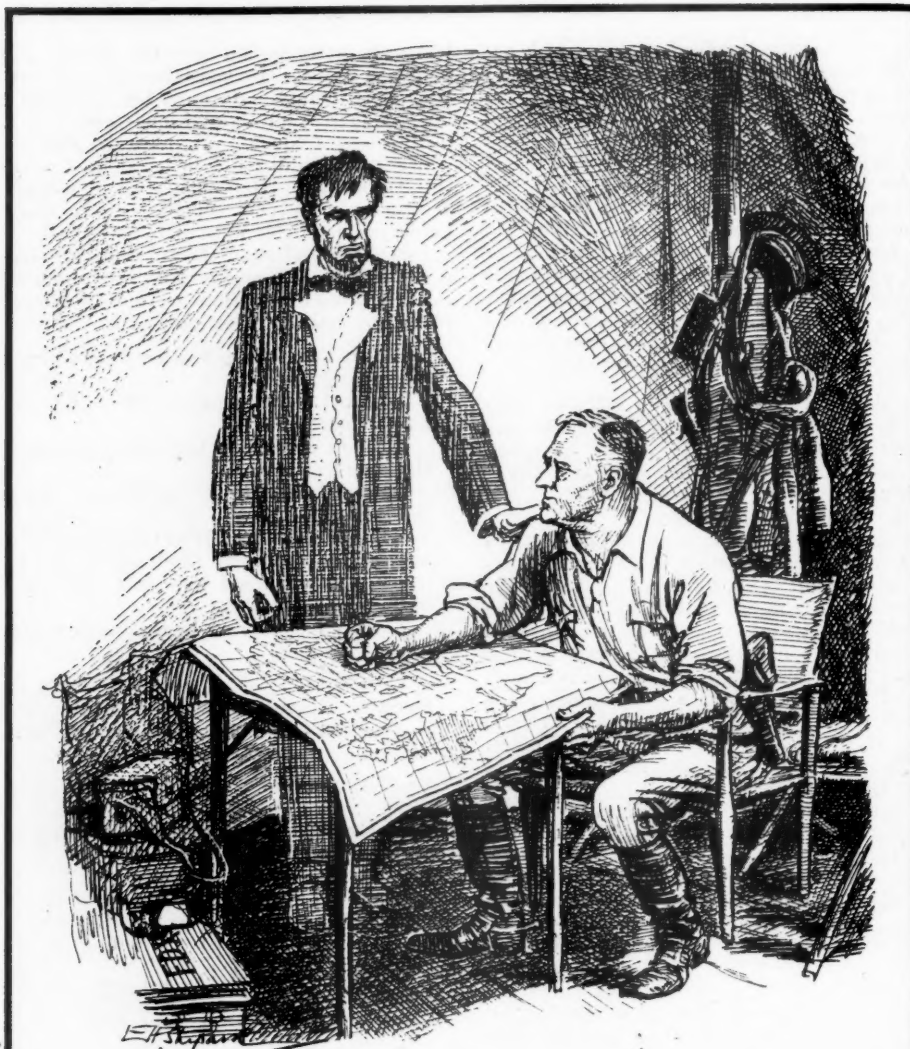
Question Number 7 carries five per cent. appreciation and the rest five per cent. depreciation for positive answers.

I will say no more. But you, my friends, must go on talking. Ask your M.P. how old he is. Then, sit near the front of the hall when he is speaking and keep your eye on his arteries.

HOB.



The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



THESE DEAD . . . SHALL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN.

"You have a greater task than I had. Slavery must be removed from the whole of the earth."

The whole civilized world heard with the deepest regret of the death last week of Franklin Roosevelt, President of the United States since March 1933, whose unrelenting efforts have been a supreme factor in breaking the enemies of freedom in the West no less than in the East. He will rank in history with Washington and Lincoln. This cartoon appeared in *Punch* on December 17th, 1941.



A CHANGE OF MASKS

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done:

Tuesday, April 10th.—House of Commons: Aftermath.

Wednesday, April 11th.—House of Commons: Reparation and Restitution.

Thursday, April 12th.—House of Lords: Censure.

House of Commons: Reparation and Restitution—Continued.

Tuesday, April 10th.—In the words of the local paper, a good time was had by all in the Commons to-day. It so happened that, during the brief Easter recess which ended to-day, Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, the Minister of Labour, had made a speech which was described by Mr. BRENDAN BRACKEN, the Minister of Information, who instantly replied, as a "blitz on the Tory Party."

To most, this appeared to be a new version of the old "agreement to differ"—except that, on this occasion, there seemed to be a great deal of differing and little or no agreement. It was a deep draught of the heady wine of political controversy, which left a considerable hangover among Members of all Parties.

Members of the Labour Party were reputed to have sat for hours with their heads swathed in wet towels thinking out impromptu remarks for use during the Question-hour. When it was seen that Mr. CHURCHILL was present to deal with questions addressed to him, there was a rustle of anticipation, and the wits got busy rehearsing their witticisms.

There was a good deal of guerrilla fighting on the front Opposition Bench. That bench has strange bench-fellows these days, since ex-Ministers of all Parties have claimed its space, and Lord WINTERTON, Mr. HORE-BELISHA, and Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS share its scanty accommodation with people like Mr. ARTHUR GREENWOOD and Mr. EMANUEL SHINWELL. So the House has the pleasure, on occasions, of seeing Mr. SHINWELL leap up to score off the Government, only to be floored (metaphorically only, so far) by his neighbour Sir HERBERT, Mr. HORE-BELISHA, or Lord WINTERTON. To-day the battle was continuous, but as much of it was conducted in undertones, it was difficult to follow. However, frequent and inexplicable bursts of laughter from

those seated near the contestants seemed to indicate that posterity was losing something by the absence of adequate acoustics.

But perhaps not, for one of the contests that was audible consisted simply of the "'Tis—'tisn't!" of the nursery.

And then Mr. CHURCHILL went into action. He solemnly warned questioners that "we should not embark on a competition to win popularity for any Party, without regard to the country's finances." This went over big with the Conservatives, less hugely with the Labour Members. A moment later,

CHURCHILL, even more blandly, replied that there had *always* been peace and loyalty within the Government. But, said he, as they were obviously moving into dispute between Parties, divergences of general political view would occur. There could be no two statements on settled Government policy, however, and Socialist Ministers could not advocate Socialism, Conservatives Conservatism . . . or even Liberals Liberalism.

This circular, all-embracing, swipe made everybody laugh, and Mr. CHURCHILL retired amid the hilarious confusion.

Then Mr. FRANK BOWLES asked for (and to the general surprise obtained) the Speaker's consent to move the adjournment so as to raise the question of safety in air travel, with particular reference to the services of Air Transport Command. Forty Members stood up to show that the demand had the support of a quorum, and a rather scrappy debate on the repair of bomb-damaged houses was interrupted later in the evening to allow Mr. BOWLES to move his motion, which he did very moderately, expressing the general concern that there were so many air accidents—including those involving the deaths, in the last few months, of three Members of the House. He suggested a public inquiry as the best means of allaying public anxiety.

But Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, the Air Minister, thought this not at all a good idea, since everything, he said, was being done to cut down accidents. This brought Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN to his feet with the strange declaration that "when you put a man into uniform, you reduce his intelligence by fifty per cent."

This somewhat tactless reference to the men with the votes (as well as the guns) did not go at all well, and Admiral Sir MURRAY SUETER tartly commented that Mr. BEVAN had insulted all men in uniform, adding: "When I was his age, I was in uniform myself!"

Then Commander CHARLES WILLIAMS, in the Chair, put the adjournment question, and people shouted "Aye!" and "No!" indiscriminately, until nobody knew how matters stood. So the question was put again, the Commander offering his Course on Parliamentary Procedure in One Easy Lesson to those who had



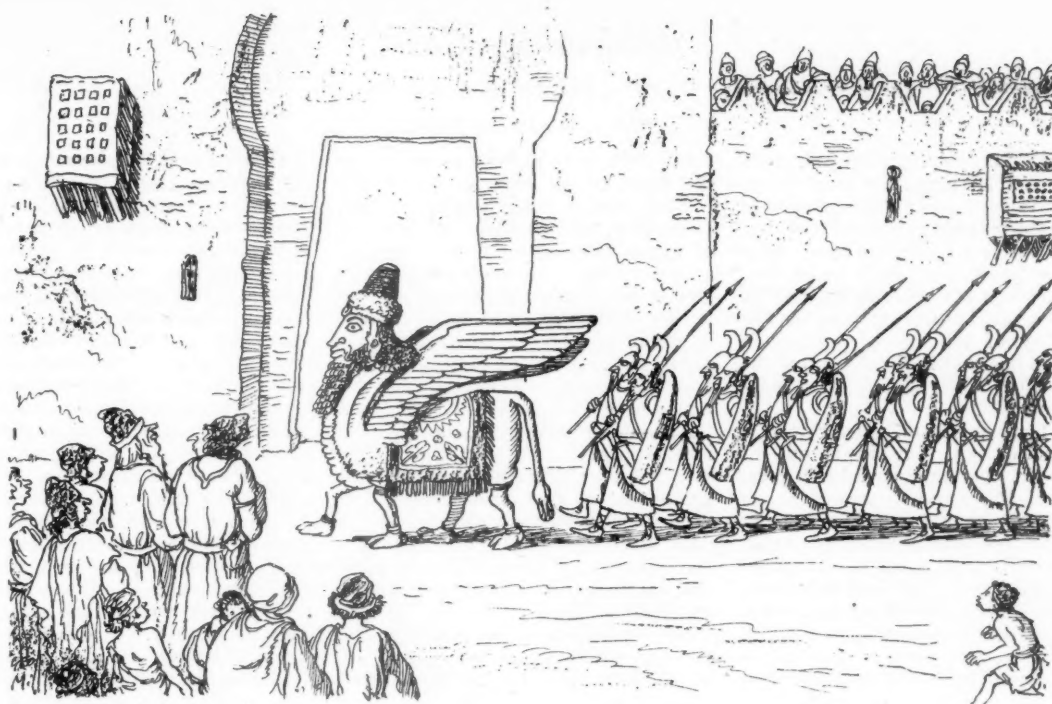
RED BRAVE ON THE POLL-PATH

"Is it accepted that peace has broken out on the political front?"—Mr. J. Lawson.

Mr. SHINWELL had a go at Mr. BRACKEN, asking that, in view of his "new antipathies" his salary should in future be paid by the Conservative Central Office, instead of by the Treasury.

The light of battle gleamed in the eye of the Prime Minister, but he answered, sweetly enough, that Mr. BRACKEN was "speaking for the Government, in which, at present, great freedom was allowed, and not as the impartial functionary who has so long been Minister of Information with general acceptance."

Mr. JACK LAWSON, jumping up from the Opposition Front Bench, blandly inquired whether peace had broken out on the political front, to which Mr.



"Of course it's not a REAL one."

shouted first one way then the other. It was simple, really:

"If you are *dissatisfied*, you say 'Aye!' If you are *satisfied*, you say 'No!'"

Having shouted, Members trooped into the division Lobbies, and in due course the Government was recorded as having won by 85 votes to 19. This defeated the proposal that the House should adjourn, and, just to make things difficult for those who are not well up in Parliamentary procedure, Mr. CEDRIC DREW, a Government Whip, promptly removed (so to say) the adjournment, which was carried, and everybody went home.

Difficult subject, Parliamentary procedure—until you get to know it.

Wednesday, April 11th.—Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, Foreign Secretary, announced that the Prime Minister would make a war statement next week, with particular reference to the future of Poland. The promise was loudly cheered, and Question-time went on apace. It ended briskly, and when Mr. EDEN—this time as Leader of the House—offered a formal motion relating to business, it was put, passed and recorded on the minutes before he had a chance to read out the typed

announcement (on what, we shall never know) handed to him by Mr. JAMES STUART, the Chief Whip.

The speed of things seemed to amuse Mr. EDEN and to leave Mr. ARTHUR GREENWOOD, sitting opposite, breathless. And so to the Requisitioned Land and War Works Bill, on which Sir JOHN ANDERSON, in charge of its passage, had performed a "Cheshire Cat" act on Second Reading. It is a big Bill—some critics called it monstrous—and Sir JOHN, under pressure, lopped off so many pieces that it will evidently be a small Bill before long.

The critics said it would enable the Government to close up rights of way, and deny access to beauty spots, and leave unsightly buildings standing in places that had been (and should be again) gems of scenery. And the critics said that the Britain that had been so well fought for by all should not suffer this fate. Sir JOHN (with the biggest phalanx or posse of Ministerial assistants seen on the Treasury Bench for a long, long time) launched the Bill on its committee stage, and the process of lopping and pruning went on merrily.

Thursday, April 12th.—The process was continued. Sir JOHN ANDERSON,

to whom retreat comes not easily, had plenty of practice in the difficult art to-day. There was an amendment designed to protect against the activities of the requisitioners our common lands, and to give Parliament better control over the future of those essential places. Couldn't be done, said Sir JOHN.

Oh, said the critics (in effect), can't it? Right, let battle commence. Sir JOHN said, well, perhaps . . .

Put off the clause until later, said the critics. Couldn't be done, said Sir JOHN.

Oh, said the critics (in effect), can't it? Right, let battle go on. Sir JOHN said well . . . all right, have it your own way.

So a fragment of the Bill was considered, with no visible result. Then some more fragments of this ill-fated measure filled the programme.

Their Lordships were having a good time on their own, with Housing the subject of a motion of censure. Hard things were said, but hard words get no votes, and the motion suffered the fate of all motions of censure directed against His Majesty's present advisers—as the Government of the day are called.

Misleading Cases

Fester v. The King; Fester v. Philpott, Rory and Company; Fester v. Platt

(Before Mr. Justice Cheese)

HIS Lordship, giving judgment in these important proceedings to-day, said: "Mr. Ambrose Fester, the plaintiff in these three suits, which, for convenience, have been taken together, is at least to be congratulated on his pertinacity, and he is to be assured at once that he has the sympathy of the Court, though, as Lord Mildew said in *Glass against the Metropolitan Water Board*, 'Sympathy pays no costs.'

The facts are these. Mr. Fester, a patriotic citizen, 'invalided' out of the Army, was employed by Messrs. Philpott, Rory and Company as an inspector at their important factory. It is admitted that he was a good and skilful servant and received what some would call, insanely, a 'sizeable' salary.

A Mr. Rice, another inspector, but a Government official, and not a member of the firm, addressed to the firm a letter which Mr. Fester was asked to sign to show that he had read it.

The letter began thus: '*Recent circumstances have created a chronological coincidence of two correlated occurrences calling for immediate comment.*'

Except that the author of this communication is fond of the letter 'C' the Court can form no clear opinion of its significance. Mr. Fester, a keen follower, as he told us in the box, of the good Mr. Haddock, took, in his own words, a 'dim view' of it, and wrote to the Government inspector as follows:

'SIR,—In reply to your letter regarding Wip Valves, I suggest that you omit the ridiculous blank phraseology and state what you wish to convey in plain English.'

The 'blank' represents an expression which, while not often used in drawing-rooms, even to-day, is familiar to all men with Service experience, is not blasphemous, or sexually indecent, and, in short, in my opinion, is no more than a vivid vulgarity.

Mr. Fester was then called before the general manager of his firm and invited to apologize to Inspector Rice. He refused. He was at once dismissed from his office.

Such is the reward, in the sphere of influence of Government Departments, of an independent mind and a respect for the English language.

Mr. Fester, however, was familiar with the long and, on the whole, honourable history of British justice. He knew that the first word is not

always the last: and he appealed, in due form, to the local Appeal Board.

Now, under the Essential Works (General Provisions) Order, the purpose of which, the Court presumes, was to secure the highest possible efficiency in the factories and workshops of the nation in time of war, a man cannot, in effect, leave his employment without permission, and an employer, without permission, cannot summarily dismiss a man except for 'serious misconduct.'

I should mention in passing that the local Appeal Boards were at one time presided over by members of the legal profession, a wise arrangement, but we are informed that already, at the date of the proceedings in question, the Ministry of Labour had decided, and decreed, that no lawyer should sit on these tribunals. This is but one more illustration of a tendency and practice which must be deplored by all thinking men, the exclusion from affairs of justice of persons schooled in the arts and manners of justice. It is, the Court supposes, a sample of the fruits of 'the Century of the Common Man'. But, much as we admire the Common Man, and the Average Man, and the Man in the Street, and even that repellent figment of the jurist's imagination, the Reasonable Man, we own that in any medical or legal trouble we should rather commit ourselves to the care of a professional adviser than to any of these well-meaning but uninstructed amateurs.

In this case the worthy (but lay) chairman of the Appeal Board, and his colleagues, had to answer this question. Did the conduct of the plaintiff amount to 'serious misconduct'?

In the Order there is no definition of 'serious misconduct' (nothing to cause surprise in an enactment devised by a Government Department). But that omission would not dismay a trained lawyer, who would turn with confidence to the Common Law. And indeed the case-law is clear. Deliberate disobedience to orders, gross neglect of work, and so on, justify instant dismissal. But the theory that a boyish impertinence, or even an adult insult, to a Government official not in the same employ will justify instant dismissal is not supported by any recorded decision of any of His Majesty's judges.

Of what avail is it, however, to quote the Common Law in proceedings where no trained lawyer is permitted either to sit among the judges or to represent the litigant or accused person? The Chairman, in this case, on being reminded that the Order did not define 'serious misconduct', held himself entitled to put his own interpretation upon the phrase. Mr. Fester's appeal was rejected; and he is now employed at half his former wage, in a position where his technical accomplishments are not being used, and cannot be used, for the benefit of the nation.

In these circumstances Mr. Fester has come to the King's Courts for justice, or failing that, as he frankly said, to advertise his wrongs and the system which produced them.

The first writ which the young victim impulsively discharged was against Messrs. Philpott, Rory and Company for wrongful dismissal. This suit cannot be entertained for a moment, for the local Appeal Board has decided that the dismissal was rightful, and by the quaint provisions of the Order, approved by Parliament, there is no appeal from their decision.

Then he proceeds against Mr. Platt, his general manager, for slander. Well, Mr. Platt, it is true, informed the Appeal Board that the plaintiff had been guilty of serious misconduct. If there had been any evidence of malice I should have ruled that this bizarre tribunal was not a Court of Law and therefore that there was no absolute privilege for statements made before it. But I found no evidence of malice. The wretched Mr. Platt said simply that the Government Department concerned was now his only customer and therefore he had to do as he did to defend the honour and soothe the feelings of its wounded inspector, Mr. Rice. It is no part of my duty to comment upon such a state of affairs; but, if it were, I confess that I should discharge that part of it with alacrity and enjoyment.

Lastly, the injured youth, with touching faith in the ancient bulwarks of the British Constitution, has asked the Court for a declaration that the treatment he has received is contrary to the provisions of Chapter 29 of Magna Carta. It is perfectly true that in that famous Chapter 'we,' that is, the Crown, undertake, among other things, that 'we will not proceed against

a freeman, nor condemn him but by lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land.' But I am surprised and saddened to learn that there is any of the King's subjects so innocent as to suppose that these words have any practical significance to-day. Hardly anyone is condemned by his peers in these times, except such malefactors as are sensible enough to go in for murder or incest, and the 'law of the land' is regarded by most of our rulers as a kind of joke, to be evaded or excluded. In this case, as we have seen, the practitioners of the 'law of the land' were deliberately kept away, and the law itself was not even considered by the tribunal. But what can I do? This is the work of Parliament, supporting a despotic Executive, for the sake of a just war. Magna Carta, I regret to say, is dead for the duration, at least; and only supreme exertions will renew its life at the termination of hostilities.

But there are still alive some remnants of our ancient rights and principles. It is not for me to advise the plaintiff or correct his solicitors. But I should have thought, without having studied the various Orders that govern us now, that it might still be possible to apply to the High Court for the issue of one of the prerogative writs in the nature of *mandamus* or *certiorari*, calling upon the local Appeal Board to show cause why they acted as they did and to justify their proceedings according to the still indestructible principles of natural, and even British, justice. That, no doubt, is a highly improper, and perhaps erroneous, suggestion: and I withdraw it at once.

I must, with regret, dismiss all the plaintiff's suits, and perhaps that will teach him to bother about the English language. Costs, however, to be paid by everybody, except Mr. Fester."

A. P. H.

Worms—A Tragedy

MOWING to-day my little lawn,
I found my random thoughts withdrawn

Though strong my shove and firm,
And thus it chanced as on I strode
That inadvertently I mowed

A rich and juicy worm.

A humble thing. His brief career
Would not compel the manly tear,
Yet deeply in my heart
I felt I might have done him wrong,
Till meditation came along

To play her healing part.

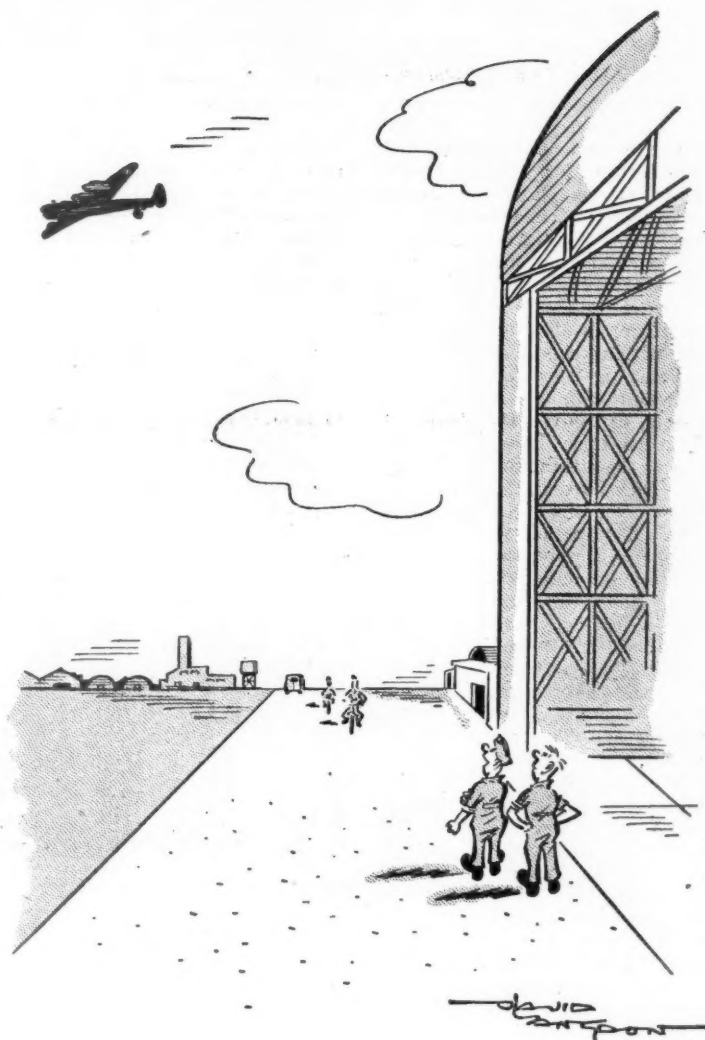
I saw that man himself, when
bowled
Over by some wild car, is told
That loss of life and limb
Is but the price he has to pay
For getting in the driver's way.
This would apply to him.

So, too, with many a wormy ill:
The thrush with perforating bill
And others that delight
In eating worms, and age, and frost
By which the youthful worm is
lost
From staying out too late,

All these, and doubtless others too,
He had escaped. I turned anew
To my small patch of green
To leave behind the mangled corpse
And ply with reawakened force
My audible machine.

'Twas but a slaughtered worm. And yet
There still remained a faint regret
I could not wholly smother,
Which maybe made my thoughts
digress,
For soon, to my acute distress,
I went and mowed another.

DUM-DUM



"Yes, I think that $\frac{3}{16}$ nut on the starboard outer's prop. spinner's okay now, Corp."

At the Play

"YELLOW SANDS" (WESTMINSTER)

IN the theatre Mr. EDEN PHILLPOTTS, joined here by his daughter ADELAIDE, has ever put character and dialogue before plot. Where there's a will there's a play, and *Jenifer Varwell's* will, watched carefully by *Lawyer Baslow* (Mr. LAWRENCE HANRAY), is as good an excuse as any for *Yellow Sands*, cream of the Devon comedies.

The place, a fishing-village within sight of Start Point, is ruled by *Varwells* and *Majors*. (A Mr. Peters, of the Wheat-sheaf, keeps open house off-stage to the satisfaction of *Uncle Dick Varwell*, the longshore loafer who is the joy of this demi-paradise). Our theme is, simply, the disposition of *Jenifer's* estate. Four thousand pounds, a cottage, and half an acre are "good gifts," as Parson Hugh Evans would have said, and *Aunt Jenifer's* relations are attentive. The old woman—Miss SUSAN RICHMOND is a portrait of serene age, a carving in ivory—has indeed a will of her own. Capriciously she ordains that the money shall go to her anti-capitalist nephew *Joe* (a bit of Red Devon), who finds, as we had guessed, that even the wealthy have their uses.

No modern dramatist is more at home with these country dances than Mr. EDEN PHILLPOTTS. His are not the dreary local yokels of the theatre's Wurzel-in-the-Wold. While other writers find the orchard walls are high and hard to climb, he has long been at work under the trees: his Devon sequence is a basket of cider-apples. Sir CEDRIC HARDWICKE was the first *Dick Varwell*. Now, after a long absence from England, he has returned to London with the straggle of hair and drooping grey moustache, the rubious nose, the shamle and slouch, the hands in pockets, husky wisdom, sucked-in cheeks, pauses, and darting glances of the *Varwell* philosopher, a "ful-celled honeycomb of eloquence" or (in the view of *Yellow Sands*) the shakiest branch on the family tree.

No doubt Sir CEDRIC will find a new part presently: meantime there is no reason why he should not play himself in again by reminding London of an old delight, his blend of pointer and sheepdog, a happily sententious sponger who has tested every public-house piano in the county. It is an abundant part, easy to overdo: Sir CEDRIC (master of the expressive pause) keeps his man safely on the foreshore of *Yellow Sands*.

Mr. H. K. AYLIFF has directed the piece with a shrewdness to match its

*Till having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,*

we hear at last about the poisoned thorns of North Borneo or the strange business of the cuckoo-clock. But no thriller can satisfy if its people are unpersuasive. Mrs. AGATHA CHRISTIE's play limps because the characters rarely keep an appointment with life. Probably they are more reasonable in the novel. On the stage they are a dull bunch.

When we are asked who killed Mrs. *Boynton* in the rose-red city of Petra we have no theories to offer. She's dead, and there's an end.

The piece has one virtue. It whisks us from the oak panelling or the corpse in the smoking-room, and provides instead a full Harker set of the city half as old as time. (There is a convenient cave in the cliff for Mrs. *Boynton*, who sits like an unpleasant idol as she drowns and later dies.) The first scene, the King Solomon Hotel at Jerusalem, has less local colour: we are thankful for the babble of Mr. HAROLD BERENS's dragoman.

Mrs. CHRISTIE's only uncommon personage is the woman poisoned—and poisonous. Once a wardress in an American gaol, she has what the jargoneers call a power complex. She is also a hypnotist and gets through much eye-work in her efforts to intimidate stepsons (two), step-daughter (one), and elder step-son's wife. Now and then she has a strong scene, thanks to the playing of Miss

MARY CLARE, who could animate a mummy. We find little to hold us in either the psychiatrist or the woman doctor who have their doubts about Mrs. *Boynton*; nothing at all in the comic-relief tourists or the members of the family who remind us of the line in *Yellow Sands*: "Providence has sent us relations for our discipline." The trouble is that the author who, as the world knows, can be the most teasing of puzzlers, has let her people talk too much. We must assume that the provision of "repeated shocks, again, again" has for the moment exhausted Mrs. CHRISTIE's energy. J. C. T.



ODD THINGS LEFT BY DECEASED

<i>Richard Varwell</i>	SIR CEDRIC HARDWICKE
<i>Arthur Varwell</i>	MR. ALAN ROLFE
<i>Minnie Masters</i>	MISS MARJORIE WOODS
<i>Nellie Masters</i>	MISS RITA DANIEL
<i>Mary Varwell</i>	MISS MURIEL GEORGE
<i>Mr. Baslow</i>	MR. LAWRENCE HANRAY

quality, though the players' dialect has a trick of wandering from the West, and Miss MURIEL GEORGE could be flintier as *Mary Varwell*, that "Martha-hearted woman, as narrow as a knife." As always the evening depends upon tumbledown *Dick*: for such a burden as this no shoulders are broader than Sir CEDRIC's. J. C. T.

"APPOINTMENT WITH DEATH" (PICCADILLY)

The main duty of a thriller is either to make the blood cold and the hair to stare, or to tangle us in a guessing-game

AN Officer in charge of a Comforts Depot to whom we have been able to send supplies of our wool writes:

"In a letter it is difficult for me adequately to express my gratitude for the valuable help you give us, thus enabling further supplies of knitted comforts to be dispatched to the soldiers overseas.

"I wish I were in the position to be able to thank personally all the supporters of your Fund, for I am most grateful for this aid to our work."

We also tender our thanks to all Subscribers, and in doing so beg them to continue their most valuable help by sending donations which will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

Conversations for V-Night

OH, yes, I knew it would be to-day. Grandma read it in the tea-leaves only last Sunday."

"I asked her if it was anything like this on Mafeking night and she was most annoyed."

"Come off that lamp-post at once, Albert. They might turn the lights on any minute."

"That's enough, please. I've five standing on the roof already."

"That's not a real policeman. He's smiling."

"We were keeping a case for to-night, but Robert started on it when Mussolini went."

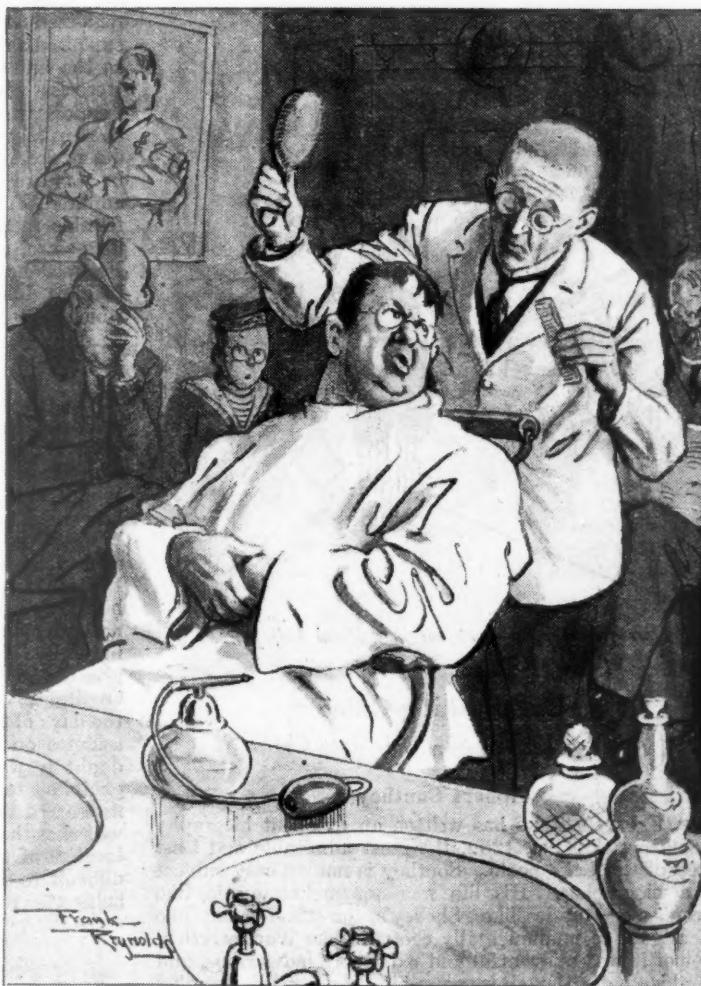
"Take it from me, all these goings-on will only mean another sixpence on the rates."

"We mustn't be late back. Remember, you've got that lecture on mustard-gas decontamination in the morning."

"It'll be a bit quiet in Tokyo to-night, I should think."

"You'd think from all the soldiers out there'd hardly be enough left to line the Rhine, let alone occupy Germany."

"Fancy that now, there's somebody still working in the War Office."



"Brush it straight back—unlike our beloved Fuehrer's."

"She said 'I lost my umbrella on Armistice Night at the end of the last war and nothing would persuade me to go out to-night. It might very well rain.'"

"... So I said 'Who do you think you are, expecting a seat? Anyone would think you were a German prisoner.'"

"Oh, no, that's not Eros. It's somebody standing on the sandbags."

"And he said, 'I don't care if the war is over. It's Icelandic cod or nothing.'"

"Let's go into the private bar. It's noisier."

"So I said to her 'Why don't you wear your father's macintosh? You'll still be needing your own coupons, Hitler or no Hitler.'"

"There he was, sitting by the fire and crying like a child. You see, he's a taxi-driver."

"I'm sorry for the cartoonists. It'll be like starting a new business."

"The club's been quite impossible to-day. There were a couple of chaps talking in the library after lunch."

"I wonder if we'll see Les before he goes on to Burma."

"Mark my words, it'll be on points before the month is out."



"Here you are, sir—men not in uniform half price."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Robert Southey

MR. JACK SIMMONS has written an excellent biography of *Southey* (COLLINS, 12/6), the most admirable and least gifted of the Lake poets. Southey is not an easy subject for a biographer. His life was not melodramatic like Byron's, or tragic like Shelley's, or tragi-comic like Coleridge's, or monumentally egotistic like Wordsworth's. Most of it was uneventful and extremely industrious, and even his youth, though topographically unsettled, revealed the same integrity and dependability as his later years. Nevertheless, Mr. SIMMONS has made a human and even a moving figure out of him, revealing a considerate and tender nature under the "air of reserve and distance" which De Quincey noted as his chief characteristic. As a child he lived with a tyrannical aunt who often did not rise till ten or eleven and would not allow Southey, who slept with her and used to waken at six, to move until she was ready to get up. It was perhaps to her that he owed both his repressed manner and his hatred of authority, which led to his expulsion from Westminster and induced what Mr. SIMMONS feels to be an ungracious attitude to Oxford. His sympathy, during his time at Oxford, with the French Revolution made the humdrum life of a clergyman, a doctor or a Civil Servant distasteful to him, and he was attracted for a time by the youthful Coleridge's vision of a Utopia to be founded on the banks of the Susquehanna by "twelve gentlemen of good education and liberal principles," who were to be accompanied by twelve equally idealistic females. Coleridge and Southey married two sisters, and the final upshot of the Susquehanna project was that Southey

found himself supporting Coleridge's wife and children, as well as his own. In his later years Southey became an uncompromising Tory, but his hatred of tyranny remained as strong as ever, and the great landowners who exploited agricultural labour came in for as much invective as the industrialists who were operating their mines and factories with wagon-loads of children supplied by the London workhouses. He was, Lord Shaftesbury said, "essentially the friend of the poor, the young and the defenceless." Under his curt rather autocratic exterior he was exceptionally sensitive, as Carlyle, whom Southey admired, divined and expressed in his own singular and forcible manner—"How has he not been torn to pieces long since, under such furious pulling this way and that? He must have somewhere a great deal of methodic virtue in him; I suppose, too, his heart is thoroughly honest, which helps considerably!"

H. K.

Appeasement in Mexico

"In the name of your ancient gods I declare you free," is an exhortation which, addressed to Germans, one would plausibly ascribe to Hitler. As a matter of fact it was addressed to Mexicans, and the principal god was not Wotan but Huitzilopochtli, a connoisseur of raw human hearts. Huitzilopochtli's record worries Lieut.-Colonel W. B. OSBALDESTON MITFORD, who proceeded to Mexico as attaché when we resumed diplomatic relations in 1927. But contemporary manifestations of the Aztec spirit worry him very little. He enjoyed every hour of his stay. He naturally and creditably liked the Indian underdog. He naturally, if less creditably, liked those who promised to give the Indians back their land. He naturally, if still less creditably, disliked the English colony as a hangover from the days of Porfirio Diaz. One gathers, too, that it looked askance on a drunken poet of his acquaintance; and no doubt it was lacking in the extraordinary tolerance he exhibits towards patriotic prostitutes, generals who massacred their prisoners, and "Fathers of the Fatherland" who shot the waiter rather than pay for lunch. As "blood-brother of the spirit of rebellion" he is revealing. It is difficult to see how *Dawn Breaks in Mexico* (CASSELL, 9/-) helps the regime it is professedly trying to commend.

H. P. E.

Liaison

During the first six months of 1944 Mr. JAMES LANSDALE HODSON carried out a fairly comprehensive tour of the United States with the primary object of establishing some kind of unofficial liaison between public opinion in both countries. His resulting impressions—gathered partly at meetings but principally through private conversations with people of all classes and shades of opinion—he has recorded in diary form under the title of *And Yet I Like America* (GOLLANCZ, 10/6), interspersed with amusing scraps of information and good stories current. He found during his visit "an immense fund of decency, kindness and good nature," as well as a solid core of friendly feeling towards Britain; but he also notes that a not inconsiderable section of American opinion is, if not definitely anti-British, at least suspicious of British motives, and imbued with the idea that Britain is profiting unduly through Lend-Lease and is not pulling her weight in the war. For a good deal of this, enemy propaganda is no doubt responsible; Mr. HODSON also considers our own propaganda machine deplorably inefficient, especially as regards the medium of the films. He deprecates strongly, too, the fulsome and apologetic attitude towards United States criticism which

is a legacy of the appeasement vogue; where such criticism is unfair he has the courage to avow his belief that "the best answer is to hit back and hit hard." C. F. S.

Faster! Faster!

It takes an irreligious and not very thoughtful age to produce the variegated brands of mysticism so popular in our own. Religious mystics are modest in their expectancy of divine favours—the evangelical mill-round is so much more important. For St. Teresa, for instance, the end of the Rule was "love of God and our neighbour," and she would have distrusted a literary *mystique* with little or no foundation on either. This, however—as how should it not be?—is the staple of Mrs. ANNE MORROW LINDBERGH's ingenious and spectacular rendering of a brush with death by an airman's wife flown over the Alps three months before the birth of her baby. *Eve's* husband, described as an English ace, has business in Egypt. A spell of sunshine will do the expectant mother good. So *Eve* must leave her first child alone in England and accompany *Gerald*, lest "the delicate structure of their marriage" should "tumble." Her ordeal, between the stratosphere and a miniature Europe, is vividly depicted as "a fictional rendering of an actual incident." Its tension is terrific; yet one feels, throughout, that *The Steep Ascent* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 6/-) deals far more happily and accurately with what is below the couple concerned than what is above them. H. P. E.

Salesman's Dream

Mr. Crisp sells vacuum-cleaners whenever he can. Whenever he can't he withdraws into an intense mental activity that would surprise his employers. Judging from the extent of these mental goings-on, as reported in *The Monster* (CAPE, 8/6), he can hardly ever have made a sale. But, oh, his fantasies, his dreams, his nightmares! The dreadful things that happen to those who will not buy from him, the still more dreadful things that happen to *Mr. Crisp* himself! The exclamatory method is hardly to be avoided in reviewing these singular adventures, set apart as they are from all the noticeable transactions of commercial travellers. There ought to be—and no doubt Miss ANNA SEBASTIAN, who wrote it, believes there is—a good deal of instruction in all this. It would be pleasant to say, for instance, that because of it one's whole knowledge of human nature had been enlarged, that one was moved to pity and passion, that Dante soared not higher nor Freud sank lower—pleasant but untrue. Miss SEBASTIAN has invented a number of ingenious and intricate anecdotes that are entirely unconnected with the everyday—a sort of soap-bubble of a story. J. S.

Victorian Ladies

The Victorian age is becoming increasingly attractive as it recedes into the past, and will soon have as much charm for us as the eighteenth century had for it. In the vivid, sympathetic and slightly defiant essay with which she introduces her portraits of *Four Victorian Ladies of Wiltshire* (FABER, 12/6), Miss EDITH OLIVIER will not even have it that the Victorian Sunday was boring. "After luncheon on Sundays," she writes, "large family parties walked round the stables, accompanied by a groom carrying bunches of carrots, or a sieve full of apples for the favourite horses." That is an experience which perhaps gains from being contemplated at a distance, through a faint nostalgic haze. It was the practice of Victorian ladies, Miss OLIVIER writes, to go for long walks, preferably with an "object," the "object" being usually a bed-ridden cottager; for in

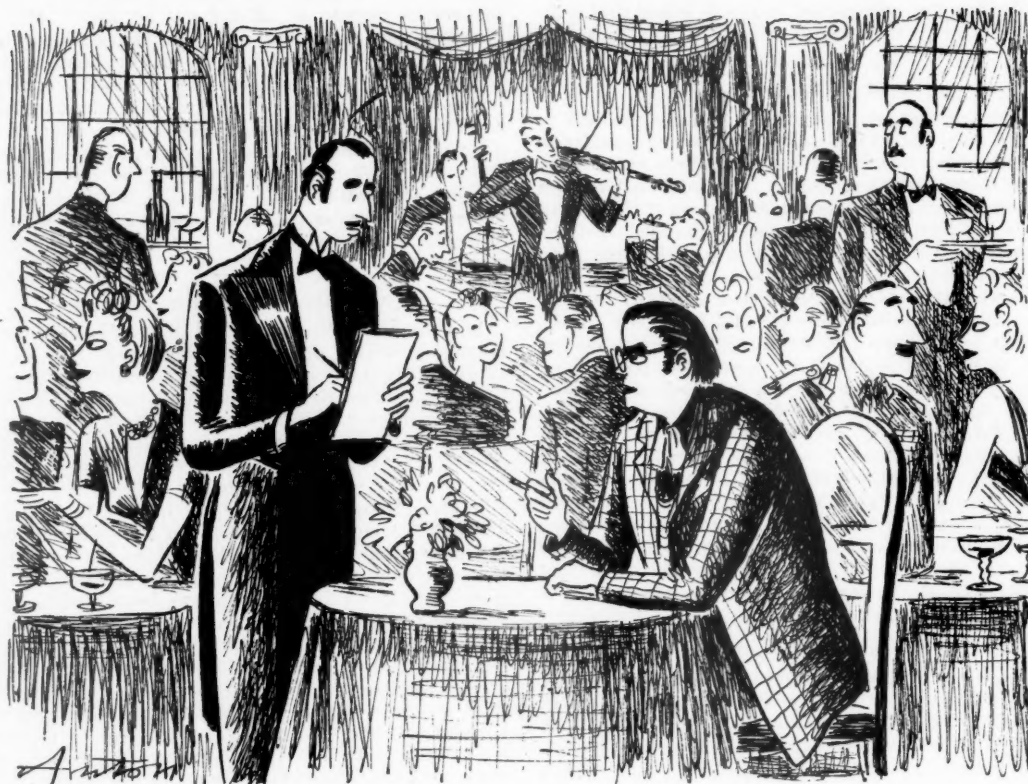
those days, it seems, there were "a surprising number of bed-ridden people in all spheres of life." Mrs. Alfred Morrison, one of the four Wiltshire ladies whose lives and characters form the main theme of this book, spent most of her life on her back, though without impairing her brilliance as a hostess or her love of such practical jokes as taking her guests for a picnic and startling them with a terrific outburst of drums, cornets, horns and bassoons from behind some near-by trees. The most remarkable of Miss OLIVIER's ladies is Miss Annie Moberly, a direct descendant of Peter the Great, whose famous adventure at Versailles was one of several almost equally strange psychic experiences. H. K.

Beyond the Limelight

In *Long Range Desert Group* (COLLINS, 12/6) Major W. B. KENNEDY SHAW (sometime Intelligence and Topographical Officer, L.R.D.G.) describes the formation and work of "the bravest, toughest and brainiest unit of Britain's great desert army"—a unit that required "only men who do not mind a hard life, with scanty food, little water and lots of discomfort, men who possess stamina and initiative." These words from a newspaper article, and Mr. Alan Moorehead's suggestion "If you have a taste for piracy and high adventure, then the Long Range Desert Group is the unit to join," give only a hint of the quality required in men who were to live often more than two hundred miles from the nearest other troops, to keep road watch from dawn at five to dusk at seven during days so long-seeming that "You look at your watch at eleven and look again four hours later and it's 11.15," and to penetrate the enemy defences as did one party of six when they bluffed their way into Benghazi in an attempt on shipping in the harbour. On this occasion one of the party reprimanded an Italian sentry—"This is simply disgraceful. Half a dozen times you have let us through this gate carrying all this stuff. How do you know we are not British? You should have asked for our identity papers." B. E. B.



"P.S. I have grown a beard."



"A glass of warm milk and ask the orchestra to play Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor."

Mr. Bostock and the Germans

I THINK perhaps if we stood in that doorway," said Mr. Bostock, and he skipped off the pavement and stood against the closed tobacconist's door with "Open" on it. He turned down the drenched collar of his macintosh, and allowed the rain to flow from his hat-brim. Then he added, with more than usual emphasis for him, "No, I would *not*."

"Then you surprise me," I said—"because I should have said that you were a very English Englishman; and the more English an Englishman is, the more he is supposed to feel sympathy with his conquered enemies."

"I don't know anything about that." He looked at me quite defiantly and then looked at the sky. "All I know is that I would *not* allow a great bottle of blood to be taken out of my veins to be transposed into a German's."

"Transfused."

"Whatever it is."

"Not even if he needed it very badly indeed?"

"Not even if he was—no," said Mr. Bostock.

"Well, I don't know," I said. "You have to try to imagine the thing very vividly. In the abstract, perhaps—"

"I am imagining it. And I can't imagine myself being a silly enough man to save a German's life so that he could send rockets the size of a cathedral at me in twenty-five years time."

"But would you think of that when you were giving your bottle of blood?"

"I tell you I wouldn't give a bottle of blood."

"Well, would you think of it when you were asked to?"

"Yes, I would."

"You wouldn't think, 'Poor lad, he's going to peg out, all for the want

of a bottle of blood, and I've got eleven bottles in me and would never really miss one'?"

"No, I should not."

"What would you think then, as you stood there and did nothing?"

"I should think of Hubert," said Mr. Bostock. "And the rockets of course. I told you that."

"Ah," I said. "And have you heard from Hubert lately?"

"Oh, yes. They've moved him to another camp, you know."

"Really?"

"Five camps in three years, that is. Dieppe, he was taken, you know."

"Poor old Hubert."

"The swine," said Mr. Bostock.

I knew of course that he was not talking about his son. Hubert, as I remembered, was a nice lad with fair hair.

"And then," said Mr. Bostock, "you ask me about giving bottles of

blood for them." He paused for a moment, seeking a phrase. "They should be wiped out," he said—"root, branch and barrel."

"Don't you mean lock, stock and sinker?"

"Whatever it is," said Mr. Bostock, bending down to wring the water from the ends of his macintosh.

"Even the little baby Germans?"

"It's the only way; the Veermart of to-day is the little baby Germans of twenty years ago."

"The what?"

"The Veermart. And the Luftwoff."

"You're a hard man," I said.

"I am," said Mr. Bostock.

"I must say," I said, "that it seems a little ruthless to me, exterminating a lot of little gurgling chaps who haven't yet lisped a single 'Heil'."

"It's the first word they would lisp. Look," said Mr. Bostock, turning on me and gazing at me very closely, taking his glasses off for the purpose—"you ought to be careful what you say, you know. There's a very strong feeling in the country about how to deal with the Germans, I don't mind telling you. You'll be getting into serious trouble if you go about saying that they ought to be let off lightly, and that we ought to leave them to grow up into another military machine." He breathed sharply on his glasses but did not replace them. "They want stamping out," he said.

"You remember the old problem: If by pressing a button which would kill a Chinaman thousands of miles away you would at the same time become a millionaire, would you press the button?"

"No, I don't think I do."

"Well, there used to be a problem something like that. Would you?"

"I don't—no, of course not. Why?"

"Nothing. Only, if you wouldn't do that for a million pounds, does it seem fair to ask someone else to do in sixty million Germans for nothing? It occurred to me, that's all."

"I think," said Mr. Bostock—"I hope that you are arguing for the sake of arguing."

"I mean, someone's got to."

"Got to what?"

"Press the button."

"Certainly, someone's got to."

"Who, then?"

"I've no doubt that there are a great many people who would jump at the chance. People who have suffered in one way or another, who have—"

"But that would merely be vengeance," I said. "Vengeance and justice must not be confused with each other. If we're going to deal with Germany

in a spirit of vengeance, saying, 'Take that for London, and that for Coventry, and that for Mr. and Mrs. Bostock's dining-room ceiling,' then what's the point of having any trials of war criminals? We might as well exterminate ten Germans selected at random for every house damaged, and ten more for—"

"War-guilt trials," said Mr. Bostock stiffly, "are to find out which Germans are to blame. Everybody knows that."

"But you say they're all to blame."

"So they are," said Mr. Bostock—

"for being Germans. And now I think the rain's stopping enough for us to get along to the station." He paused to struggle briefly with his macintosh collar. "There's only one way," he said—"shoot the bally lot. As for you, you're a menace to the future of Europe, the way you talk."

"And you, Mr. Bostock," I said, "are a disappointment to me as an Englishman. Why, according to our national character you ought to be a pioneer in the planning of food-ships for starving German boys and girls; your common humanity should be triumphing over—"

"Gar," said Mr. Bostock. "I'd food-ship 'em, I'd triumph 'em! If only I could get my hands—"

He had stepped out of the doorway only to be thrown back with his full weight of nine stones, slap on to my chest.

"Guph," I said.

Mr. Bostock said that he was very sorry. He hoped he hadn't hurt me. He had been pushed. We then saw that a small crowd was gathering on the pavement, its backs to us, and we heard the sound of marching, a little ragged.

The prisoners of war went past. It was only a small party, a hundred or a hundred and fifty, perhaps. Mr. Bostock watched them sternly. So did everybody else. When they had gone the crowd went too. So did Mr. Bostock and I.

"It seems a terrible thing to say," he said, as he stopped a hundred yards farther on to turn down the collar of his macintosh—"a terrible thing."

"You've been saying terrible things for the last half hour. Now what?"

"Only that one of them reminded me very much of Hubert."

"The fair, fat, fierce one?"

"No, no. The fair, thin, hungry one, with the bandaged hand."

"Probably hurt himself sending off a rocket," I said. "Serve him right."

"I wonder how far they're going to march."

"Until they drop, I expect. Jolly good thing."

"He was really very like Hubert."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"I suppose they'll get a meal to-night?"

"You're a menace to the future of Europe."

"Isn't it laid down, under the Geneva Covenant?"

"Convention," I said.

"Whatever it is," said Mr. Bostock, sighing brutally. J. B. B.

Toller Applies

To the Sure-Fire School of Journalism.

SIRS,—It is my ambition after the war to follow in the footsteps of my uncle Lionel in becoming a journalist, this relative perhaps being known to you as the pseudonym "Spheroid" under which camouflage my uncle apparently discussed Association Football topics in a prominent provincial weekly prior to meeting my aunt as the result of a misquotation from Tennyson in "Spheroid's" column. Although subsequently under no need of a regular income from his pen, my uncle maintained his interest in journalism, and a keen news sense, so that he was often seen making casually for the telephone after unusual happenings, which was a sign for my aunt immediately to go away for a fortnight to avoid publicity of the nature of "Local Lady's Brave Act" when the clothes-line in the roof of the kitchen collapsed over my aunt, upsetting a kettle and igniting a doily, my uncle rushing in and rushing out again for a camera to photograph the occurrence and subsequently composing a second story "Local Heroine Destroys Photograph," when my aunt captured the negative of herself sitting on the kitchen floor with a wet apron over her head and holding a fish-slice.

In this way, and from anecdotes of his professional life, I have already to some extent absorbed the spirit of journalism from my uncle as well as a number of tips for advancement as implicit in the story of a fire my uncle was dispatched to cover in his early days of reporting. Despite this conflagration having started by the unspectacular method of drying clothes having caught alight, and having been extinguished promptly by the fire brigade, my uncle was not deterred from his duty and questioned the lady concerned with the idea of valuable ship-models escaping destruction, there being several of these in glass cases in the hall; by chance, however, eliciting

the presence in the house of a parrot which was capable of speech and which, after some persuasion on the part of my uncle, was admitted likely to have produced cries on the outbreak of fire, this leading to a banner headline "Help, Help, Cries Parrot," the sagacious bird being satisfactorily credited with saving the house, the ship-models and lives of the inmates by this timely warning; other newspapers copying the story in which the parrot was additionally credited with great age and unswerving loyalty to its widowed mistress, a fund being raised to provide the couple with improved circumstances and the best type of seed, and finally an offer being received for the parrot to appear in a music-hall turn at £25 per week when the burning house was realistically simulated on the stage and the parrot aided in his mission of mercy by a gramophone record which unfortunately he on the first night sabotaged by inserting into the microphone nautical phrases of a vulgar sort which bore no relation to the fire if, in fact, not expressing approval of it.

In addition to catching from my uncle the determination of a true journalist at all costs to return with the news—a further example of this tenacity being the occasion when he was sent to interview a prominent public figure who skipped into a toolshed and locked the door, my uncle climbing on the roof and requesting information through a disconnected stovepipe under which the figure in question lit a quantity of dried leaves and escaped in the confusion so that the total of words in the interview were not above half a dozen on which, however, my uncle worked with his journalistic insight with the result that he was able to publish a full column on the views of the celebrity concerned on the attitude of China with special reference to the Jumble Sale then being sponsored by his newspaper—in addition to precepts inherent in such examples of my uncle's work, I absorbed the general atmosphere of newspaper routine beyond what is normally known to the beginner.

Thus I understand from my uncle the system of "copy" passing from the reporters' room to the sub-editors' and thence to the "stone," this drill in fact being vividly impressed on my mind by the unfortunate dismissal from one weekly newspaper of my

uncle who attempted to please his superiors by installing a copy-tube from one room to the other with the object of saving time and being first with the news; this tube, however, ejecting the first story (sent by my uncle as a surprise) with an excess of power so that it took the editor in the chest from a distance of ten yards, the editor concerned then looking down the tube to see what it was and receiving the second story in the eye, my uncle unfortunately making things worse by entering with a bottle of whisky to celebrate the invention.

It may not further be normally

known to first-year students how various newspaper features come to be written, and for what in consequence they must be prepared in entering the profession, an example of this being Aunt Margaret's Corner which at one time my uncle would habitually take over on the indisposition of a fellow journalist otherwise known as "Marksman" who combined the responsibility with boxing notes, greyhound forecasts and unofficial liaison with members of the police, the strain of which activities at intervals overcame him so that my uncle was thrust suddenly into a world of passion and methods of washing blankets, his tip for dealing with this type of literary creation being to take three quick ones and think of a girl called Flossie Waterford.

A further reason for my desire to enter journalism as the result of talks with my uncle was his success in publishing poems by the method of inserting them, with the implication they were well-known, at the head of suitable news stories such as an account of a flower show which could be prefaced with a piece on daffodils, in this way giving to the public his entire output of verse with the exception of some warm stanzas addressed to a character called Daisy who occupied his affections prior to my aunt, these stanzas finally being used for comparative purposes in reviewing books by poets of the day—although perhaps this information should be treated confidentially in consideration for my aunt, while the practice may not be strictly professional should I later adopt it myself.

I further made the acquaintance, during a short hold-up at the Rhine crossing, of several war correspondents and military observers with the object of commencing contact with Fleet Street, so that I would be glad if you could advise for these prior qualifications a shortened and cheaper course to your normal as, should Japan prove stubborn, it appears I may not receive my gratuity for some years after my need of it.

Yours faithfully,

B.L.A.

J. TOLLER, Lt.

Total War Corner

"Dreamland is in Government hands. There is no hope that it will be available for the public this season."—From a "Daily Telegraph" reference to Margate.



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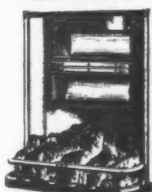


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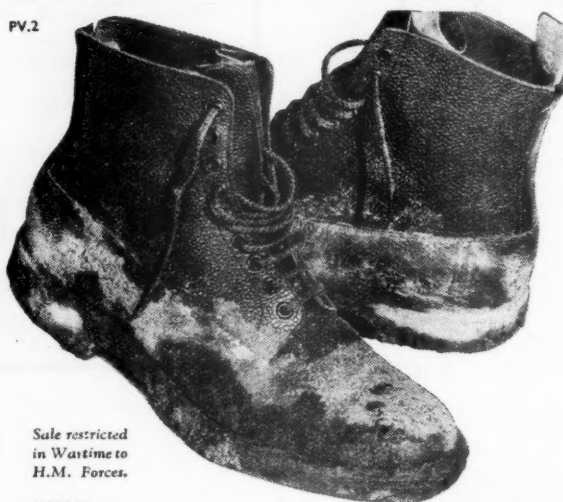
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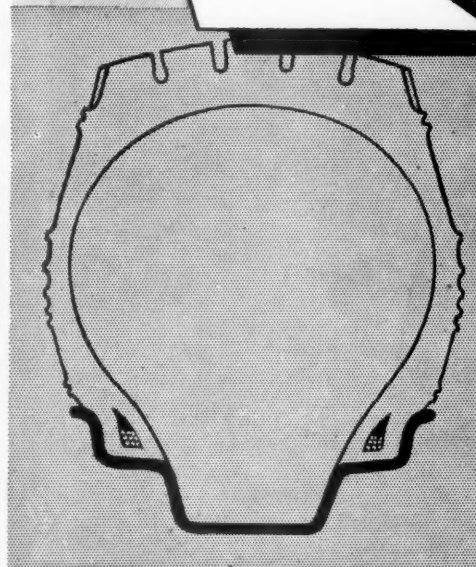
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